

MARSHA V. ROOD, FAICP
216 S. MADISON AVENUE, #302
CENTRAL DISTRICT
PASADENA, CA 91101
marsharood@earthlink.net
April 3, 2009

The Honorable Mayor Bill Bogaard

Honorable Members of the City Council
Pasadena City Hall
100 N. Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109

**Subject: Process for Resolving Issues Related to the Installation of Street Trees
in the Playhouse District; City Council Meeting of April 6, 2009;
Item 7.A.1**

Dear Mayor Bogaard and Members of the City Council:

I have followed the issues associated with the implementation of the *Playhouse District Streetscapes, Walkways, and Alley Plan* (approved by the City Council on November 18, 1996) (the "*Plan*") and the upwards of eight (8) City Council meetings in January, February, March and now April of this year devoted to this subject. The issue of tree removal and replacement has essentially torn the community apart with battles fought in the newspapers, on blogs, at demonstrations/boycotts, verbally at City Council meetings, through e-mail exchanges, etc.

As the Development Administrator for the City for nearly 20 years, I served as lead staff to develop and fund this project. Based upon my experience with the City and with this specific project, I would like to recommend that the City

Council take actions similar those take by the City Council at that time to come to an agreed upon resolution.

BACKGROUND: As the Plan was being prepared implementation, members of the community raised issues regarding the removal of existing, healthy, mature trees in the Playhouse District in order to accommodate the new *Plan*. In response to those issues, the City Council directed staff to meet with community stakeholders to address the issues at hand and return to City Council with recommendations. City staff convened representatives from the *Pasadena Beautiful Foundation*, the *Urban Forestry Advisory Committee*, the *Playhouse District Association* and the staffs of the *Public Works and Transportation*, *Housing and Development*, and *Planning and Permitting Departments*. The staff also engaged the services of a landscapes architect, an urban planning and architecture firm, and a professional meeting facilitator. The stakeholders' group met twice at City Hall on January 26 and February 16, 1999, to review in detail the approved *Plan* and to develop a consensus approach to phasing the removal of existing street trees and the planning of replacement and additional trees as documented in a memorandum dated February 24, 199[9] (*please see Attachment No. 1*). Although the passage of time and hazy memories have eroded the consensus-phasing plan, it is a process that I believe will prove to be productive in the near-term future.

RECOMMENDATION: Convene a dialogue with the community to address the issue as follows:

1. Engage the services of an urban designer/planner, a landscape architect and a professional meeting facilitator (other than City staff);
2. Identify stakeholder representatives from the Pasadena Beautiful Foundation, the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee, the Playhouse District Association, other Central District associations, and other stakeholders as appropriate;

3. Identify key staff from the City departments involved such as Public Works, Planning and Development, Transportation and other departments as appropriate);
4. Convene stakeholder meetings that are professionally facilitated, that have written agendas, an agreed upon set of meeting conduct rules, and a time frame for completion;
5. Review the *Plan* as approved as well as the City's *Master Street Tree Plan* and discuss the reasons for elements of the *Plan* which are at issue;
6. Identify issue, goals and objectives for the District and the streetscape, and a consensus recommendation regarding any appropriate amendments to the existing *Plan*, and
7. Present the consensus recommendation to the City Council for action.

In conclusion, it would be a detriment to Pasadena and the District to leave this key portion of Colorado Boulevard for any extended time without a tree canopy and without a distinctive, place-making streetscape. Public policy actions that continue this condition will be a detriment to the beauty and pedestrian comforts of our City, to the Central District's economic well-being and stability, and to the City's walkability and environmental health. *Pasadena can do better than this.*

Sincerely,

[Marsha V. Rood]

MARSHA V. ROOD, FAICP

Att/ [Playhouse District] "*Streetscapes, Walkways and Alley Project Tree Implementation Plan COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS RECOMMENDATIONS*"; January 26 and February 16, 1999.

ATTACHMENT NO. 1

Streetscapes, Walkways and Alleys Project Tree Implementation Plan

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a synopsis of two meetings held with Community Stakeholders to discuss the Tree Implementation schedule for Colorado Boulevard and El Molino Avenue per the approved Playhouse District Streetscapes, Walkways and Alleys Plan (approved by the City Council on 11/18/98). These meetings were scheduled in response to concerns raised by the community regarding the removal of existing, healthy, mature trees in the District in order to accommodate the plan. City Council directed staff to meet with the Community Stakeholders, discuss the replacement of trees, design a mutually-agreed upon plan for tree implementation, and report those conclusions and findings.

MEETING OF JANUARY 26, 1999

Attendees *Playhouse District Association (PDA):* Joel Sheldon, Marcia Jacobs, Mark Nay, Michael Moreno

Pasadena Beautiful Foundation (PBF): Nina Chomsky, Barbara Koenig

Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC): Barbara Cole, Barbara Koenig (also PBF)

City Staff: Marsha Rood, Karen Balchunas, Erlinda Romo, H & D Dept.; Bob Baderian, Dan Rix, Rebecca Fisher, Jim Valentine, PWT Dept.; John Poindexter, Design Review Staff, P&P Dept.

Consultant Team: Larry Morrison, Simran Malhotra - The Arroyo Group; Nord Eriksson, Steve Carroll, EPT Landscape Architecture

Meeting Facilitator: Pat McLaughlin, Moore, Iacafano and Goltsman (MIG)

A. **Introductions of Stakeholders/Overview of District Strategy and the Playhouse Streetscapes, Walkways and Alleys Plan.**

Pat McLaughlin of MIG facilitated the meeting. Marsha Rood provided an overview of the Playhouse District Strategy for Revitalization, and the Central District Goals. Larry Morrison of the Arroyo Group and Nord Eriksson/Steve Carroll of EPT Landscape Architects provided an overview of the process and description of the Approved Playhouse Streetscapes, Walkways and Alleys Plan. Information was provided to all attendees prior to and during the meeting and graphic presentation boards were displayed at the meeting to provide Stakeholders with additional information for discussion purposes.

B. **Discussion of Expectations/Desired Outcomes and Discussion of the Implementation Plan and Agreement for Phased Implementation.**

Stakeholder discuss their expectations, concerns and expected outcomes for the project, and provided input and ideas regarding tree implementation. Areas of agreement were reached, and the following Conceptual plan for phased tree implementation was formulated by the Stakeholders:

C. **Conceptual Plan for Implementation of Lighting and Trees in the Playhouse District:**

1. **Phase I Implementation :**

- a. Installation of Pedestrian Lighting on Colorado Boulevard and El Molino Avenue and removal of specific trees to accommodate this installation.
- b. Installation of 66 new *Ginkgo biloba* (Ginkgo trees) on Colorado Boulevard.
- c. Mexican Fan Palm trees to be installed only on *El Molino Avenue* between Union Street and Green Street (new trees on north side of Colorado, infill palms only on south side of Colorado).
- d. Removal of existing trees *only* to accommodate these installations.

Phase II Implementation:

- a. Installation of 30 Mexican Fan Palm Trees on Colorado Boulevard.
- b. Removal of 20 remaining existing street trees to accommodate new palm trees.

Agenda Items for Discussion/Clarification at Meeting 2 - Scheduled for February 16, 1999.

The Stakeholders requested that Staff and the Consultant compile the following *Agenda* of information for discussion at the next meeting in order to better understand both the number and species of trees to be removed, for an informed decision regarding the preferred Phase I Implementation schedule.

- ◆ *Site Plan* showing accurate locations of Existing and New street lights, new Ginkgo trees ; Location of Trees to be removed and Trees to remain in Phase I.
- ◆ *Photographs and Location Plan* showing existing trees to be removed and trees to remain.
- ◆ *Total numbers of Carrotwood and Ficus trees to be removed and to remain.*
- ◆ *Timing Schedule for Installation of Lighting and Ginkgo trees*
- ◆ *Project Construction Schedule* (bidding, contract award, construction) for lights & trees.
- ◆ *Maintenance Costs* for new trees, watering and pruning schedules for new & other District trees (Green St.)

OF FEBRUARY 16, 1999

Playhouse District Association (PDA): Joel Sheldon, Mark Nay

Pasadena Beautiful Foundation (PBF): Nina Chomsky, Barbara Koenig

Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC): Barbara Cole, Barbara Koenig (also PBF)

City Staff: Marsha Rood, Karen Balchunas, Erlinda Romo, H&D; Dan Rix, Rebecca Fisher, Jim Valentine, PWT

Consultant Team: :Larry Morrison, Simran Malhotra - The Arroyo Group; Nord Eriksson, Steve Carroll - EPT Landscape Architecture

Meeting Facilitator: Pat McLaughlin - Moore, Iacafano and Goltsman (MIG)

of January 26, 1999 Meeting Agenda and Conceptual Agreement by Pat McLaughlin of MIG.

itation of Information and Open Discussion of the Proposed Phase I Implementation , led by Carroll of EPT, addressing and clarifying issues regarding street lighting, trees to be removed, ed and replaced as part of the Phase I Conceptual agreement. Presentation materials ed of the following information:

Site Plan of the Playhouse District. Graphic/color representation showing locations of the following:

a) Existing Cobra Street Lighting; b) New Lighting; c) Number/Species of Trees to be Replaced; d) Numbers/Species of Trees to Remain and ; e) Location of New Ginkgo Trees n Colorado Boulevard.

Photographic Boards Showing Individual Trees in the District. Graphic boards of each block showing pictures of each tree to be removed or relocated or to remain in Phase I, keyed to the Site Plan.

Matrix of Playhouse District Street Trees : A block-by-block comparison by tree species and summary of the following: a) Total Number of Existing Trees in the District : 82; b) Number of Trees to Be Removed in Phase I: 38 Trees - 18 Ficus and 18 Carrotwood; c) Total Number of Relocated Trees: 2 London Plane Trees (to Union Street per Master Tree Plan); d) Number of New Ginkgos Trees to be Planted in Phase I: 66 New Trees and; e) Proposed Total of Trees in District at Phase I Implementation: 108. Net Gain of 26 trees .

C. Overall Implementation Schedule /Installation of Street Lighting/Planting of Ginkgo Trees/ Phase II Palm Tree Schedule.

The Stakeholders discussed the timing for Phase I Implementation of the street lights and Ginkgo trees and agreed upon the following schedule

1. Pedestrian Lighting should be installed separately from Ginkgo trees to minimize the removal of the large number of trees at one time from Colorado Boulevard (18 trees removed for Lighting, 21 additional trees removed for Ginkgo planting), and to ensure the health of the newly planted Ginkgo trees (from potential damage by New Year's revelers). *Pedestrian lighting is anticipated to be completed prior to November 15, 1999.*
2. Timing for Installation of Ginkgo Trees. Planting anticipated to occur in Winter of 2000. The optimal planting time for trees of this type occur during dormancy in the Wintertime, and to allow for best initial growth conditions (the cool, rainy winter weather). One contract will be written with specifications for selected planting contractors to provide 2-phased removal of trees (for lighting and Ginkgo planting).
3. Phase II - - Palm Tree Installation. Timing for Phase II Palm trees implementation is dependent upon Ginkgo growth and health, but anticipated to occur within 5-years following Ginkgo planting (2005). Information discussed included 1) the size of the Ginkgo trees at the time of planting (24" vs. 36" box); 2) Tree growth pattern and survivability rate (within 1-5 years); 3) potential for implementing structural soils (to provide optimal growth environment) and; d) expected and additional watering schedule for trees. The following was approved by the Stakeholders:
 - a) Allow 2 years for the Ginkgo trees to grow to a healthy size, and to provide a reasonable canopy prior to planting palms;
 - b) Convene an *Evaluation Meeting* within 2 years following the planting of Ginkgo trees to evaluate their overall health (year 2002);
 - c) Convene meeting within 3 years (year 2003) and formulate a *Final Implementation Schedule* for Palm Tree installation.
 - c) Removal of 20 remaining Ficus and Carrotwood trees and Installation of 30 new Palm Trees (anticipated to be in year 2005).

In addition, the Stakeholders agreed that provision of *educational information* will be beneficial to the District in keeping the trees healthy:

- b) Rebecca Fisher (City Forestry Supervisor) will prepare a flyer on the Care of Street trees for distribution to the PDA. This brochure will be distributed to all Pasadena Business Districts.
 - c) A joint PDA-UFAC meeting will be held in January 2000 to discuss the planting of the Ginkgo trees, its growth patterns, and the Do's and Don'ts of caring/watering/fertilizing/soil preparation/pruning of these trees.
4. Maintenance Schedules/Costs: the Stakeholders agreed to undertake the following measures in order to ensure that the Ginkgo trees remain healthy, with sustained growth.
 - a) The Playhouse District Association will assist in the effort by undertaking additional watering to ensure continued health of the Ginkgo Trees during the formative growth period.
 - b) Discussion of potential cost savings that may be realized for the Project from the following sources : 1) Purchase of Colorado Boulevard Lighting with Old Pasadena Lighting (cost not yet known) and; 2) Reducing the box size of the Ginkgo trees (about 50% cost reduction) could be utilized toward additional watering, fertilizing, soi

preparation and potential for including structural soils for better tree health and 3) more frequent pruning of Green Street Ficus trees.

A number of complex issues were discussed and resolved in a cooperative manner during the two meetings. The agreed-upon measures finalized by the Stakeholders during these meetings will ensure that the new trees proposed for the District will be planted and maintained in a manner that will ensure the new trees' continued health, while realizing the vision of the Playhouse District through the incorporation of streetscape improvements.

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MEMORANDUM - CITY OF PASADENA

DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 1998
TO: STEVE HARDING, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT
FROM: MARSHA ROOD, DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR
SUBJECT: PLAYHOUSE DISTRICT STREETSCAPES PROJECT
JOINT STAFF/ COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATION REGARDING
TREE IMPLEMENTATION

The City Council directed staff to meet with community Stakeholders to discuss issues related to the installation of street trees in the Playhouse District, and report the findings and conclusions determined. The plan was developed following two meetings convened by Staff with Stakeholders comprised of representatives of the Playhouse District Association (PDA), Pasadena Beautiful Foundation (PBF), and the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC). The following is staff's recommended course of action as timely for the phased implementation of street trees on Colorado Boulevard and El Molino Avenue in the Playhouse District.

A. FALL 1999/WINTER 2000: - PHASE I IMPLEMENTATION

1. Install New Pedestrian Lighting on Colorado Boulevard and El Molino Avenue (Los Robles to Lake Ave.)
October-November 1999.
 - a. Remove 18 existing *Ficus nitida* (Indian Laurel Fig) and *Cupanopsis anacardiodes* (Carrotwood) trees to accommodate the new lighting standards. The trees will be removed at the time of lighting installation. The lighting package will be combined with the Old Pasadena lighting in one bid package.
2. Install 66 New Ginkgo biloba - Maidenhair Trees on Colorado Boulevard (Los Robles to Lake Ave.)
January/February 2000.
 - a. Remove 20 existing Ficus and Carrotwood Trees to accommodate new Ginkgo tree
 - b. Relocate two *Platanus acerifolia* (London Plane Trees) to Union St. per Streetscape Plan.
 - c. Install new decorative Tree Grates for each Ginkgo tree (Total of 66 new grates)
3. Install 22 Washingtonia robusta - Mexican Fan Palms on El Molino Avenue (El Molino Av. to Green St.)
January/February 2000
 - a. Remove existing trees (in poor health) located on El Molino between Colorado Bl. and Union St. Replace with new 20' tall palm specimens per Streetscapes Plan.
 - b. Plant infill Palm trees *Only* on El Molino Avenue between Colorado Bl. and Green Street. Existing Mexican Fan Palms to remain on this block. Relocate 4 Queen Palm trees to Colorado Bl. in Old Pasadena.
4. Additional Items/Information:
 - a. Joint meeting to be held with UFAC and the PDA prior to planting the trees (in Winter, 2000) to provide information to the District and a brochure outlining the care (watering, fertilizing, pruning) of new trees.
 - b. The PDA has volunteered to assist PWT with additional tree watering in the District

(IMPLEMENTATION: (Years 2002-2005)

Stakeholder Meeting Prior to Phase II Planting (Est. Year 2002).

- a. Meet two-years following planting of Phase I Ginkgo trees (in 2002) to assess the health of the Ginkgo trees (discuss maintenance, watering and tree loss). Evaluate the need for replacement or other measures.
- b. Schedule meeting three-years following planting (in 2003) to finalize Phase II planting implementation.

Phase II Installation of 30 Mexican Fan Palm Trees on Colorado Boulevard (Est. Year 2003).

- a. Removal of 20 remaining Ficus and Carrotwood trees to accommodate new palm trees.
- b. Installation of 30 Washingtonia robusta - Mexican Fan Palms on Colorado Boulevard.

is memo is a more detailed description of the meetings undertaken in order to reach the 1 Phasing schedule listed above. Please advise staff as to the preferred course for reporting to the Council.

-mem.wpd

From: alex@redoakinv.com [mailto:alex@redoakinv.com]

Sent: Monday, April 06, 2009 1:13 PM

To: Bogaard, Bill; "Chris Holden"; district1; Fuller, Margo; Thyret, Pam; Stone, Rhonda; Suzuki, Takako; De La Cuba, Vannia

Subject: Public Comment For Tonight - Agenda Item 7A1

Dear Members of the Pasadena City Council,

I respectfully ask you to reconsider your decision to revisit the tree specifications for Colorado Boulevard in the Playhouse District. I ask you to modify your decision in a way that eliminates the delay in getting trees replanted, regardless of their species.

During the past two decades, I have lived and developed in the neighborhood, but I currently own no property that is affected by the decision and I have no preference for any of the tree species considered. I am just a concerned citizen who loves Pasadena.

I feel that it is harmful to leave the neighborhood naked during what may be a long public process. Public hearings, plus advisory input from UFAC, then Planning Commission, then Council, with controversy all along the way – this is a lot of process. Would anyone be surprised if it took a year? It is one thing to engage a spirited discussion about species, but it is another thing to punish ourselves while we await uncertain results. It would be disheartening and wasteful to unwind the pieces of the 1996 plan that have already been implemented. If it has taken us 13 years to implement just part of the old plan, how long will it take to create and implement a new one?

Tree schemes in a book are just theory; trees in the ground are reality. Unfortunately, the ground will remain empty while people argue about the book. Residents, businesses, and visitors will suffer in the meantime. The cost of having naked streets simply outweighs the potential benefit of mitigated controversy.

I ask the Council to be pragmatic. Above all other considerations, please do what it takes to get trees in the ground right away.

Alex Wong

Red Oak Investments LLC

2101 Business Center Drive, #230

Irvine, CA 92612

949-733-2000 p

949-733-2005 f

714-342-2502 c

www.redoakinv.com

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